

VII. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The BLM and the FS requested and received consultation from many organizations and individuals, public and private, in developing the draft and final Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Riley Ridge Natural Gas Project.

SCOPING PROCESS

Regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR, Part 1501.7) require an early and open scoping process. During this process, the scope of issues to be analyzed and significant issues related to the Proposed Action were identified. Information obtained during the scoping process was one of the sources used to determine significant impacts to be addressed in detail in the EIS.

Additional purposes of the scoping process were to inform affected federal, state, and local agencies and other interested persons about the proposal, and to identify existing environmental reports and information related to the proposal. Through the scoping process, decision making is enhanced by emphasizing significant issues and reducing the magnitude of paperwork and the length of the statement.

The details of the public scoping meetings held during the initial phases of the environmental impact statement work are summarized in Appendix A of the draft EIS.

DRAFT EIS CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The BLM and FS were joint lead agencies responsible for preparation of the EIS for the Riley Ridge Natural Gas Project. Cooperating agencies included the Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Corps of Engineers, and the Environmental Protection Agency. All of the above mentioned agencies provided written comments on early drafts of the EIS and the technical reports prior to publication of the draft EIS and Technical Reports in May 1983.

Table 4-1 on page 4-1 of the FEIS lists the federal and state agencies, local governments, and individuals that were sent copies of the draft EIS and requested to complete a formal review of the document.

PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIS

The draft EIS (INT. DEIS-83-34) was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency on May 20, 1983, and announced in the Federal Register on Thursday, May 6, 1983 (Vol. 48, No. 103, Page 23,719). In addition, media releases were sent to area radio stations and newspapers to announce the availability of the draft EIS and locations of public hearings, described the Proposed Action, identified key impacts, and requested public comment on the adequacy of the statement.

Approximately 850 copies of the draft EIS were distributed by mail to various individuals, organizations, and government agencies.

During the 60-day public comment period (May 20 to July 19, 1983), BLM and FS conducted four formal public hearings to solicit comments on the draft EIS (see Table 4-2 of the FEIS for further details). The public hearing transcripts have not been reprinted in the EIS as they are part of the public record. Copies of the hearings are available for review at the following offices:

Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Wyoming State Office
2515 Warren Avenue
P.O. Box 1828
Cheyenne, WY 82001

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Rock Springs District Office
P.O. Box 1869
Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, WY 82902-1869

Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Pinedale Resource Area
P.O. Box 768
431 East Pine Street
Pinedale, WY 82941

Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Kemmerer Resource Area
P.O. Box 632
415 U.S. 30 North
Kemmerer, WY 83101

Forest Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Supervisor
Bridger-Teton National Forest
P.O. Box 1888
340 N. Cache Street
Jackson, WY 83001

District Ranger
Big Piney Ranger District
P.O. Box 218
591 Front Street
Big Piney, WY 83113

The BLM also received 44 letters addressing the draft EIS during the public comment period. All letters and testimony were assigned a reference number and reviewed. Substantive comments (those that presented new data, questions or new issues bearing directly on the effects of the Proposed Action and its alternatives) were responded to.

PUBLIC REVIEW COMMENTS ON THE FINAL EIS

The final EIS was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency on November 28, 1983. Although not an official comment period, comments received on the final EIS were considered in developing this Record of Decision. The BLM and FS received 8 letters on the final EIS, 1 late letter on the draft EIS, and 1 letter which had been inadvertently misfiled on the draft EIS. Each was carefully reviewed and considered in the development of this Record of Decision. For the benefit of the reviewer and user of this document, the 10 letters received are found in Attachment E.